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Schloss & Murray, eds., THE BELIEVING PRIMATE: SCIENTIFIC, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

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arguments against dualism found in the writings of many materialists. Let's hope that these essays provoke some genuine dialogue and responses on the part of materialists.

I end with some mildly critical observations. The book is almost completely focused on contemporary issues and arguments. There is almost no attention paid to the history of thought about these issues. Even Descartes's views are described in textbook fashion without much regard for historical complexity. There is no attention given to medieval treatments of the soul. This is not really a fair criticism; no book can do everything. However, I suspect that attention to the historical Descartes might reveal that Descartes was not, or not always, a "Cartesian." In one key place Descartes argues that soul and body are separable, even if they are actually not separate and can only be separated by omnipotence.

I also would like to have seen some attention paid to the fundamental issue of what is required to treat two things as distinct entities. Views about such issues are assumed but not really discussed. I think it is not as clear as many assume what it means to say that I and my body are distinct entities. Most of the authors in this book seem to think of the soul as a postulated entity "in" the self. However, perhaps the soul just is the self, understood as a whole and not reducible to any physical object. I believe that Christians in particular need to think more about what it means to say that the self is embodied or incarnated. Perhaps it is true that *I* am essentially a soul, and that a soul is not a physical object. However, I may be the kind of soul whose nature it is to exist in a bodily form. If something like this is right, then it is misleading to think of the soul as a separate entity existing alongside the body. Rather I am a soul existing in a bodily manner.

The Believing Primate: Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Reflections on the Origin of Religion, ed. Jeffrey Schloss and Michael Murray. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. 365. $59.95 (cloth).

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This is an interesting and wide-ranging collection of new essays by psychologists, social and biological scientists, philosophers and theologians on the currently much-debated issue of whether religious belief has an evolutionary origin and, if so, whether that calls into question its truth or rationality. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is not a complete meeting of minds to be found in the volume, but at least the issue is discussed without the heat and acerbity that characterizes the semi-popular works of some of the more prominent public figures with well-known views on the topic. Some of the scientific contributors to the collection do tend to write in terms that will strike the ears of many philosophers and theologians as being unduly simplistic and reductive. But then, no doubt, to the ears

of empirical scientists some of the contributions of the philosophers and theologians may sound obscure and over-sophisticated. The best that I can hope to do in a short review is to convey some of the key ideas and proposals of the essays and try to relate them to one another. I shall begin with the scientific contributions, since it is the recent scientific developments in this area that have driven the current debate, even if antecedents to that debate go right back to the original reception of Darwin's work.

Dominic Johnson and Jesse Bering, in "Hand of God, Mind of Man: Punishment and Cognition in the Evolution of Cooperation," proceed to "outline a precise, proximate cognitive mechanism that suggests it is the expectation of fear of supernatural punishment that serves to promote cooperation" and argue that "this mechanism evolved via individual selection" (29). Joseph Bulbulia, in "Religiosity as Mental Time-Travel: Cognitive Adaptations for Religious Behaviour," proposes a "commitment-signaling theory" which holds that "being religious in religious society helped our ancestors to manage the burdens of social living" (46), and goes on to claim that "The signaling hypothesis explains the otherwise puzzling link between religious cognition, moral cognition, and emotional display" (73). Justin Barrett's "Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology," in contrast, is more explicitly open to the possibility of reconciling science and theology. Barrett declares that "Rather than seeing cognitive and evolutionary explanations of religion as hostile to Christianity, I see much promise in the cognitive sciences to enrich our understanding of how humans might be "fearfully and wonderfully made"" (77). Peter J. Richerson and Lesley Newson, in "Is Religion Adaptive? Yes, No, Neutral. But Mostly We Don't Know," judiciously point out that "In the face of biological and cultural complexity and diversity, phenomena like religion are unlikely to support sweeping generalizations about adaptation versus maladaptation" (117), thereby pouring some much-needed cold water on some of the more extreme claims made by scientists in the field. Paul Bloom, in "Religious Belief as an Evolutionary Accident," is more confident in arguing for the authority of science on these matters, suggesting that "humans possess certain highly structured systems that have evolved for understanding the social world" and that religion "emerges as a by-product of these systems" (119). His proposal is that "humans possess early emerging and universal cognitive biases, including hypersensitivity to agency, a natural propensity to see non-random design as caused by an intelligent designer, and body-soul dualism" and that "These are the seeds from which religion grows" (124). Reading these four essays, then, reveals that the scientists disagree about both the evolutionary mechanisms that might be at work in the origin and persistence of religious belief and the extent to which evolutionary explanations in this domain might be hostile to theological explanations and to the truth of religious beliefs. It additionally emerges that they by no means all agree about what, exactly, *constitutes* a "religious" belief for the purpose of this debate.

I turn next to the more consciously philosophical contributions, some but not all of which are provided by philosophers and philosophical theologians. Peter van Inwagen, in "Explaining Belief in the Supernatural: Some Thoughts on Paul Bloom's 'Religious Belief as an Evolutionary Accident,'" aptly remarks that "Naturalistic explanations of supernatural belief offered by naturalists like Professor Bloom . . . tend to convey the implication that they are 'all the explanation there is,'" and then proceeds to show "this implication is not logical" (134). Van Inwagen concludes that there is no reason at all to suppose that an explanation of Bloom's sort necessarily "resist[s] incorporation into some larger, more comprehensive supernaturalistic account of the universality of human belief in the supernatural" (138). Alvin Plantinga, in "Games Scientists Play," goes rather further in challenging the finality of scientific explanations in this domain. In answer to his own question, "Why do [scientists] come up with theories that are incompatible with Christian belief . . . [and] according to which religious belief is not produced by truth-aimed cognitive processes?," he replies that "The short answer, I think, is that this feature of their scientific activity is connected . . . with the *methodological naturalism* . . . that characterizes science" (14–19). In other words, the very methodology presumed by most empirical scientists has a built-in bias against the tenability of theological belief and argument, so that it is unsurprising if scientists tend to come up with explanations of religious belief that are hostile to its truth or rationality. Michael J. Murray, in "Scientific Explanations of Religion and the Justification of Religious Belief," presses further on the internal consistency of this scientific methodology, contending that "[I]f the only force honing our belief-forming mechanisms is natural selection we have no reason to think that any of our belief-forming mechanisms are reliable when it comes to truth" (177). Thus, the sorts of considerations that might lead scientists to prefer their own explanations of religious belief to those of theologians actually threaten to undermine from within the cogency of their own scientific beliefs and theories. Another piece by Michael J. Murray, this one co-authored by Andrew Goldberg, "Evolutionary Accounts of Religion: Explaining and Explaining Away," allows that "[E]volutionary explanations of religion . . . may be true, as far as they go" but argues that "nothing about such explanations undermines, or trumps, explanations in theistic or alethic terms" (198). In a similar vein, Charles Taliaferro, in "Explaining Religious Experience," contends that "one needs to allow for both naturalism and theism as possible candidates for accounting for religious experiences," judiciously remarking that "Neither should be presumed to be privileged at the outset" (214).

I move on finally to some essays which interestingly suggest that theological thinking has a certain kind of epistemic priority over scientific thinking, with the implication that purely scientific explanations of religious belief cannot provide the final word on the matter. Del Ratzsch, in "Humanness in their Hearts: Where Science and Religion Fuse," remarks that "A cosmos which is (as science must assume) coherent, uniform, intelligible

. . . and containing scientists whose cognitive and sensory faculties are suitably shaped to that reality, looks *structurally* remarkably like a creation scenario" (240), and goes so far as to suggest that "[I]it may be that although we can think in superficially atheistic ways, really *thinking* about the *cosmos* may be an irreducibly theistic undertaking" (244). John Haught, in "Theology and Evolution: How Much Can Biology Explain?," argues that a "*full* account of the emergence of critical intelligence has to look for an ultimate explanation of why the universe is intelligible at all," wisely observing that "A candid openness to that question cannot exclude theology as the source of a reasonable response" (260). Jonathan Haidt, in "Moral Psychology and the Misunderstanding of Religion," points out that "A militant form of atheism that claims the backing of science . . . may also backfire, polluting the scientific study of religion with moralistic dogma and damaging the prestige of science in the process" (291). Christian Smith, in "Does Naturalism Warrant a Moral Belief in Universal Benevolence and Human Rights?," argues that "Naturalism, when taken with all seriousness and honesty, would most likely simply liquidate our standard concept of morality" (310). His answer to the "key question" of "whether the metaphysical world view of naturalism . . . can provide the intellectual and emotional foundation to sustain [the] belief in benevolence and rights" is that, as far as he can see, it *cannot* (317).

The final essay of the collection is David Sloan Wilson's "Evolutionary Social Constructivism: Narrowing (but Not Yet Bridging) the Gap," presumably placed there to follow the contribution by Christian Smith, some of whose earlier work he criticizes. The tone of this piece is in sharp contrast to that of the theologically-oriented ones just discussed and more consonant with that of the opening essays of the volume. Wilson confidently asserts that "[Religions] vary in what they tell their believers to do and this diversity can be explained with the same theoretical concepts and empirical tools that work very successfully for the study of non-human species," commenting that "In this fashion, [Christian] Smith's theistic account of morality and religion will go the way of theistic accounts of the natural world" (337–338).

Reflecting on the essays in this volume, I am struck by the thought that current attempts by cognitive scientists and evolutionary psychologists to explain pervasive features of human thought, including religious belief, are—if this doesn't sound too paradoxical—*profoundly superficial*. For all their ingenuity, they simply fail to register the sheer size and depth of the gulf between human thought and non-human animal "cognition." That failure is exemplified by Wilson's remark that "The general trend in evolutionary research has been to show that claims of human uniqueness were greatly exaggerated" (320) and his suggestion that all that is really unique to us is our capacity for "symbolic thought": "Symbolic thought is like a lofty peak in an adaptive landscape that can be climbed only by first crossing a valley of low fitness" (321). Symbolic thought is important, but infinitely more important is the *scope* of human thought, whether

or not it exploits "symbols." As other philosophers have remarked, non-human animals have an *environment*, whereas human beings have a *world*. Our ability to think about the *cosmos*—as Ratzsch terms it—and *our place within it* is what sets us apart so radically from non-human animals. And, of course, it is this ability that is presupposed by anything deserving the name of *religious belief*. When human consciousness was first struck, with wonder and awe, by "the starry heavens above and the moral law within," that was when truly human thought became possible. There is no mystery as to why this brought with it a capacity and indeed a propensity for religious belief, just a mystery as to how it could ever have happened at all.

Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy, by James K. A. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010. Pp. 155. $19 (paperback).

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One of the remarkable features of the twentieth century has been the emergence of the Pentecostal Movement in its multiple variations. Birthed in part in a radical wing of the Holiness Movement in North America at the turn of the century (the etiology is much contested), it grew exponentially. By the end of the century, it was a movement encompassing perhaps half a billion adherents or a fourth of Christians in the world, second only to Roman Catholicism in number of followers. Pentecostalism has become a profoundly influential global tradition, especially in the southern hemisphere, where it often sets the tone for the religious arena. In light of this development, it is only a matter of time before it begins to show up on the philosophical radar screen. Within half a billion there is bound to be a steady trickle of folk who end up as philosophers; we can be sure that they are not all stupid. On the contrary, they are likely to add a whole new perspective to the work of philosophy over time. Moreover, Pentecostals are already showing up in philosophy classes as students; those who want to teach them successfully should take time to get to know their intellectual background in all its diversity and complexity.

One of the first philosophical treatments of Pentecostalism is provided by this fine volume by James K. A. Smith. To be sure, a book like this is likely to set many teeth on edge. Our knowledge of Pentecostalism is both underdeveloped and underdetermined; however, it is important to get beyond the standard stereotypes and caricatures. Smith is a quietly enthusiastic but very knowledgeable insider who knows his way around both Pentecostalism and philosophy. While he naturally finds his home in the Continental tradition, he is well able to speak to those formed in the analytic tradition. While much of this material has been published before, it is very useful to have it all in one volume.